

# Friends of Riverfront Park

## 2012 OVERVIEW: FIRST SUMMER ON THE WATER

February-September

### Friends of Riverfront Park meetings

Friends of Riverfront Park was organized in February 2012 with the mission of filling Newark's riverfront with positive activity, ensuring public safety, and making sure that everyone in Newark has a reason to come to check out the city's newest riverfront parks as soon as they are open. Committee meetings are held bi-monthly at Riverbank Park field house, with attendance ranging from 8 to 20 residents and representatives of stakeholder groups.



June 2

### Newark Walks to the Water & Riverfront Celebration

Friends of Riverfront Park organized, coordinated a large set of partners, and secured sponsorships for for a community celebration on June 2, 2012, attended by more than 700 Newarker. The day-long event featured a tantalizing mix of Newark talent and activities: capoeira, tennis, a speech by historian Dr. Clement Price, yoga, step dancing, spoken word, art-making, jazz & blues, face-painting, Double Dutch, and Zumba (see attached program). Festivities were kicked off by a ceremonial walk in which a number of community organizations and residents from each of Newark's wards were led by Malcolm X. Shabazz & East Side High School Marching Bands on a 2-mile walk from Newark City Hall to Newark's newest green space.



Mondays & Tuesdays, July-September

### Free public riverfront Zumba & Yoga

Weekly yoga and zumba classes have filled the park with life and energy. Over the entire summer, over 400 Newarkers have participated.



Free Public Riverfront Zumba & Yoga!



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### June-September Newark Boat Tours

Continuing the work began by Newark Riverfront Revival in 2009, Friends of Riverfront Park coordinated 24 Newark Boat Tours, allowing over 500 visitors to see the river for themselves and learn about how they can join the movement to revive it.

### August Youth Sports Programs

Coordinated by Friends of Riverfront Park and sponsored by Seidler Chemical and Ironbound Community Corporation, Down Neck Community Group organized free-of-charge baseball, softball, basketball, and football programs for young people. DNCG also operates the park's concession stand, and contribute a portion of revenues towards program costs.

### September 14-15 Newark Riverfront Summit

To reflect on accomplishments, celebrate the commitment of Newark residents and community-based organizations to reviving their river, and to discuss goals for the coming years, Friends of Riverfront Park in partnership with the Loeb Fellowship convened for the first Newark Riverfront Summit on Friday, September 14 and Saturday, September 15.

Newark hosted a visiting group of architects, landscape architects, community development experts, and cultural planners who asked provocative questions of Newarkers and allies about their city and its river. The delegation met with community-based organizations, real estate developers, City officials, and residents to discuss how improvements along Newark's riverfront might be tied to the cultural, economic, and recreational life of Newark's residents and communities.

The weekend Summit consisted of three neighborhood focused sessions (Lower Broadway, Downtown, Ironbound), the first-ever Jazz concert and Historical Storytelling at Essex County Riverfront Park, and culminating with a public conversation at the Newark Museum which addressed the riverfront as a whole. Altogether, over 250 residents and stakeholders participated in the first-ever Newark Riverfront Summit.

